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## Health Care & Wellness Committee

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### HB 2419

**Brief Description:** Studying barriers to the use of the Washington death with dignity act.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Rude, Macri, Kloba, Peterson, Springer, Cody, Ormsby, Riccelli and Doglio.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Requires the University of Washington to conduct a study on the barriers related to accessing Washington's Death with Dignity Act.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 1/22/20

**Staff:** Riley O'Leary (786-7296) and Chris Blake (786-7392).

**Background:**

Washington's Death with Dignity Act.

The Death with Dignity Act (Act) allows Washington adult residents that have a terminal illness with six months or less to live to request medication that the patient may self-administer to end the patient's life.

The patient must first make an oral request to a physician for medication, followed by a written request, followed by a second oral request. A waiting period of 15 days is required between the time of the first oral request and the writing of the prescription. The patient has the option to rescind the request at any time. Once the request has been processed and fulfilled, the medication may be self-administered.

Physicians, pharmacists, and health care providers are not required to participate, and health care providers may prohibit participation on their premises. Facilities that prohibit participation may not sanction physicians or pharmacists for participating under certain circumstances. No person participating in good faith compliance with the Act shall be subject to civil or criminal liability, or professional disciplinary action.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

The sale, procurement, or issuance of any life, health, or accident insurance or annuity policy or the rate charged for any policy must not be conditioned upon or affected by the participation in the Act.

Department of Health Annual Report.

The Department of Health (Department) is required to collect and report on information from health care providers regarding participation in the Act. The Department is also required to review the information for compliance and produce an annual statistical report. The data collection requirements are set by the Department and include demographic characteristics, aggregate data on the number of participants, information from death certificates and after-death reports, medical history, and a summary of the timing, complications, and involvement from emergency medical services after self-administration.

**Summary of Bill:**

The University of Washington is required to conduct a study and report on the barriers facing Washington resident's access to the Death with Dignity Act (Act) including:

- a lack of awareness of the Act;
- the 15-day waiting period;
- concerns that inhibit participation of health care providers;
- hospital, medical, hospice, and long-term care providers' policies that restrict the participation and distribution of information about the Act;
- geographic access to pharmacies that dispense medications related to the Act;
- restrictions based on the self-administration requirement;
- lack of insurance coverage for the services and medications necessary to participate in the Act;
- the need for improvements to the data collection system; and
- any other barriers identified in the course of performing the study.

The report is due by December 1, 2020, and must include its findings and any legislative or administrative policy recommendations to the Governor and the committees of the Legislature related to health policy. The report must protect patient and health care provider confidentiality.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 15, 2020.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.